



CHAPTER 8 OUTLINE

1. **History of Parks and Recreation in Grove City**
2. **Organizational Structure**
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4. **Community Events and Staff Involvement**
5. **Staff Levels and Training**
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INTRODUCTION

Grove City residents strongly desire beautiful parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs. This chapter will analyze the organizational approach used by the city to deliver parks and recreation services.

OVERVIEW

A departmental-wide knowledge of the organizational structure of the Parks and Recreation Department allows:

- The supervision, coordination and task allocation to be conducted efficiently in order to achieve departmental goals.
- Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each staff member in order to serve the community in a most effective manner.

HISTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN GROVE CITY

The concept of Parks and Recreation is deeply rooted in the history of Grove City government. Recreation and leisure services have been an important part of our city's history dating back to 1955, when the first official park in Grove City was created and became a place for children to go to play baseball. This park, built on ground formerly housing the city's water treatment systems, was named Windsor Park after Mr. Harold Windsor, a City Council member who strongly supported the park's development. In 1982, the city received state and federal grants that led to building of the Evans Center for seniors in Windsor Park. The Evans Center has

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undergone two building renovations in recent years to accommodate the growing need for recreational services for the 55+ population.

In 1974, Grove City officially established the Parks and Recreation Department by hiring the first department director. Shortly after, Gantz Farm was purchased by the city, and Gantz Park was built. The farm had a barn and farmhouse on site. Instead of demolishing the farmhouse, the city chose to renovate it to create recreational spaces for the community. Gantz Barn, which was rebuilt, houses many programs including RecSchool.

During the next few years, through partnerships with developers, the city acquired many neighborhood parks including Westgrove, Indian Trails, Keller Farms, Meadow Grove and Blodwen. Other parks in the system at this time included Evans Park and mini-parks Swearingen and Creed Lawless.

In 1995, Grove City bought the Fryer farm on the south end of Grove City. This 110-acre park opened in 1998 as the largest park in the Grove City parks system. The park is home to many amenities including an eight-diamond softball complex, sledding hill, Discovery Frontier and the Grove City YMCA.

The Grove City Parks System continues to be a pinnacle in the community for recreation and leisure services. Currently the parks system includes 18 parks (more than 260 acres) and more than 700 recreation programs each year.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Parks and Recreation Department operates under the direction of the City Administrator and Mayor of Grove City. In order to operate effectively, the department works in cooperation with several other city departments including, but not limited to: the Service Department, the Community Relations Office and the Development Department. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the oversight and evaluation of all recreation services in Grove City, including the operation of the Big Splash Aquatic Center, Evans Center and Gardens at Gantz Farm; the administration of all youth and adult sport leagues; the coordination of the P.A.R.K before- and after-school childcare programs and RecSchool preschool program; and the planning of community events.

The Park Board consists of five citizen members who are appointed by the Mayor to serve four-year terms. The Parks and Recreation Department Director and Recreation Superintendent serve as the day-to-day contacts for the Park Board. Both the Director and Superintendent sit on the board as ex-officio members. The Park Board elects a chair, vice chair and secretary each year. The Park Board acts as the eyes and the ears of the community and make recommendations that impact the Parks and Recreation Department.

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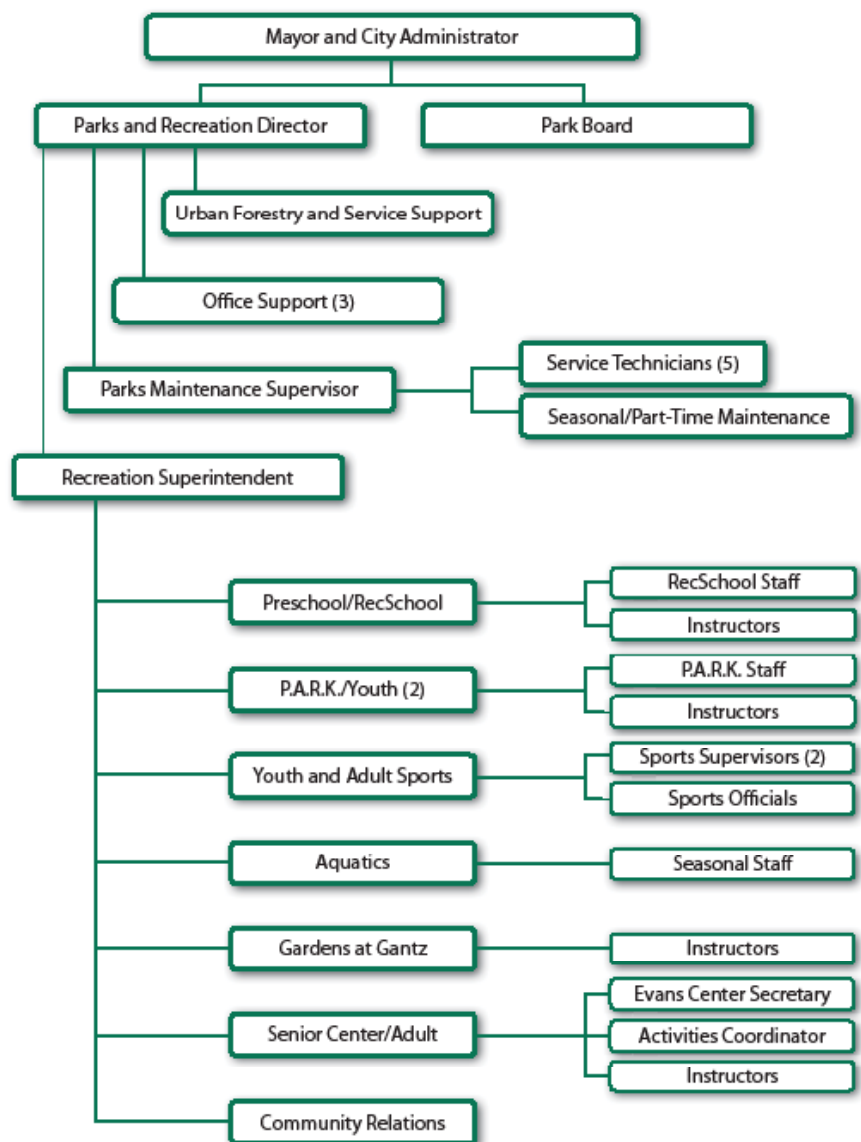
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Surveys conducted by an independent public opinion research firm show that Grove City residents feel they are treated well by staff when they call the Parks and Recreation Department.

The same survey also shows that residents rank all programs offered by the city – for seniors, adults and children – as above average.

Evaluation of the programs and services offered through the Parks and Recreation Department are vital for development and growth. It is the Parks and Recreation Department staff's belief that the programs, activities and services offered should be outcome-based for the participants. Program participants should have a clear understanding of what they will take away from the activity once completed. In order to measure this standard, staff developed a set of evaluation tools that are utilized at the completion of each class. These patron surveys include questions that measure the customer experience, the park visitor experience and the program experience. Evaluations are collected and logged to guide the staff through changes and upgrades to services.

Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defined roles and responsibilities for staff members are critical to the development and growth of the department and its programs. Through constant communication and collaboration, the department is able to ensure the most efficient programs and services for the community.

City Administrator

The City Administrator is appointed by and works under the supervision and direction of the Mayor. The City Administrator serves as the full-time administrative head of the city's operations. The incumbent coordinates, supervises and directs all administrative activities of the city subject to authority of the Mayor and in conformity of the Charter.

The City Administrator prepares and submits annual public reports for all city departments, boards and committees. The Administrator identifies and recommends continuous improvement opportunities for the Finance Department and may perform other duties as required to promote and enhance the quality of life for Grove City residents.

Parks and Recreation Director

The Parks and Recreation Director is appointed by the Mayor in consultation with the City Administrator and works under the direction of the City Administrator. The Director is responsible for strategically positioning, organizing, directing, supervising and accepting accountability for the department. The incumbent is the executive official in charge of the department and applies all policies adopted by City Council and confers with the City Administrator in developing the strategic direction of the department.

The incumbent plans both short- and long-term goals and objectives for the department and oversees the strategic planning and delivery of services to citizens and staff. The Director manages all administrative policy and fiscal activities of the Parks and Recreation Department by preparing capital and operating budgets, evaluating current functions and operations, and makes the appropriate adjustments. The incumbent also prepares recommendations for the Mayor and City Council and assures compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and professional standards that govern the parks and recreation field.

The Director is responsible for the supervision of 18 full-time employees, 40 part-time employees and approximately 100 seasonal employees in both parks and recreation services. Additionally, he/she is accountable for the effectiveness of the public services of the department, and for the fiscal and ethical integrity reflected in the conduct of its personnel.

“

Thank you for all the hard work you do to provide a place for the children to have fun and enjoy sports.

- Planning Area A Resident

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Recreation Superintendent

The Recreation Superintendent is appointed by the City Administrator in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Department and works under the executive supervision of the Director. He/she is responsible for the management of major recreation programs and the general supervision of the department, making all management and financial decisions when the Director is out.

This position is responsible for fielding and responding to any public questions, ideas or issues in an appropriate manner. He/she serves as a liaison for all city department on behalf of all community events, and is in charge of the development of new programs and activities for the department. The Recreation Superintendent monitors inventory of supplies and oversees the daily operations and organization of staff, volunteers, and resources. The employee plans, directs and coordinates the work of professional or non-professional employees through lower supervisors. Performance criteria is formulated for activities to assess their effectiveness. The Recreation Superintendent prepares, submits and administers the annual budget that includes facilities and equipment as well as operational needs. He/she oversees the hiring, training and evaluation of staff. The Recreation Superintendent is responsible for providing a written annual report to the director and periodic reports as required by regulatory, credentialing or other control bodies.

Recreation Coordinators

Recreation Coordinators are appointed by the City Administrator in consultation with the Parks and Recreation Director and supervised by the Recreation Superintendent. Coordinators directly report to the Recreation Superintendent. There are currently seven coordinators for the following program areas: RecSchool/Preschool, P.A.R.K./Youth, Sports, Aquatics, Adults/Seniors, the Gardens at Gantz and Community Relations.

Incumbent coordinators are required to supervise and evaluate the specific recreation program for which they are responsible. Coordinators oversee the daily operations of programs and organize staff, volunteers and resources needed. They must schedule and coordinate programs, practices, leagues, special events, field trips, classes, competitions, tournaments, lessons and facilities as appropriate. Coordinators are responsible for maintaining inventory of supplies and equipment. They also may teach within their area of specialty as needed. Coordinators assist the Recreation Superintendent in the preparation and administration of the annual budget and supervise in the hiring, training and evaluation of staff in their area of recreation. Coordinators are also responsible for evaluating programs to identify needs for improvement.

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Parks Maintenance Supervisor

The Parks Maintenance Supervisor is a classified employee under Grove City Civil Service, and works under the managerial direction of the Parks and Recreation Director. He/she assists the Director in preparing the annual maintenance budget, capital improvement budget and helps formulate short and long-range maintenance goals. The Supervisor monitors vehicles and facilities to determine needed maintenance and repairs; schedules such repairs; and plans, coordinates and assigns the work of maintenance personnel. The Maintenance Supervisor is responsible for coordinating maintenance projects undertaken by contract personnel, and organizing or providing assistance to special events. Appropriate safety precautions must be adhered to when performing duties. This position is responsible for identifying and recommending continuous improvement opportunities for the Service Department.

The Parks Maintenance Supervisor oversees the maintenance and operations of all Grove City parks. Maintenance duties in the parks include, but are not limited to: mowing grass, litter removal, weeding, cleaning, safety evaluations and repairs of play equipment, snow removal, painting and other duties necessary to maintain the parks. The Parks Maintenance Supervisor oversees the duties of five service technicians and all seasonal and part-time maintenance.

The Maintenance Supervisor is responsible for prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance. Through collaboration with the Director, a policy on trail and park maintenance should be put into place. The existing maintenance tasks and goals are explained in detail in the Parks Maintenance and Operations Manual.

Park Board

The Park Board consists of five citizens, assigned by the Mayor, who serve four-year terms. Members review and make recommendations regarding parks, recreation, open/green space and cultural arts.

The Grove City Park Board meets on a bi-monthly basis and discusses citizen requests and suggestions, upcoming capital projects and recreation programs. While the Grove City Park Board is not a policy-making board, staff often takes policy initiatives to the Park Board for their verification and validation before moving forward. The Grove City Park Board also serves as the oversight group for special projects in the Parks and Recreation Department.

The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation could be headed by the Park Board in order to encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing such a group. Park foundations are organizations that support a local parks and recreation department. Through fund raisers and donations, park foundations are able to offer additional support for city parks and programs.

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Urban Forestry and Service Support

The Urban Forester is appointed by the City Administrator under the administrative supervision of the Service Director. The incumbent is responsible for the management of the forestry program by managing field work, counseling City and other government officials and recruiting and coordinating the efforts of citizen volunteers.

The Urban Forester directs the installation and maintenance of public trees in the city's right-of-ways, bike paths, parks and public green spaces as necessary to implement the Urban Forestry Master Plan. The Urban Forester directly oversees the Urban Forestry Specialists, who assist in the management of forestry field work and landscape maintenance performed by seasonal employees and volunteers.

The Urban Forester provides guidance and direction to crews of seasonal employees, part-time and full-time employees, volunteers and contracted companies involved in planting and maintenance operations. The incumbent is also responsible for implementing the city's Landscape and Street Tree Program, and supervising or performing any planting, removal, pruning, fertilizing, watering or general maintenance of street trees. He/she maintains computerized inventories and status reports of all such duties.

Other essential functions of the Urban Forester include providing advice to Administration, Planning Commission and City Council on city landscape code issues arising from development proposals. This position also handles the inspection of development projects under construction to ensure development projects are pursuant to the Code. The Urban Forester is responsible for developing annual budget requests based on the city's urban landscape forestry program needs. The person in this position may initiate and execute bid processes for contracts on special projects or capital improvements.

The Urban Forester must investigate complaints and respond to requests for information from the public, and is charged with identifying and recommending continuous improvement opportunities for the Service Department. The Urban Forester is to interact with the public through forestry education in the public schools, volunteer involvement and among residents regarding the planting and care of trees and landscape.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS AND STAFF INVOLVEMENT

Through strong partnerships with other city departments, non-profit organizations, businesses and groups, the residents of Grove City enjoy a wide variety of low-cost or no-cost events. The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department plays a major role in most community special events. The Recreation Superintendent, Director and Recreation Coordinator - Community Relations are responsible for much of the preparation and organization for community events with assistance from other staff members and volunteers.

The events are described in detail in Chapter 5 of this plan and can also be found each season in the community guide, the Source.

STAFF LEVELS AND TRAINING

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department encourages employees to be involved with professional organizations. Some of the professional organizations the staff are affiliated with include: National Recreation and Parks Association, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children, Ohio Association of Senior Centers, National Alliance for Youth Sports, USSSA, Ohio School Age Child Care Alliance, Environmental Education Council of Ohio and the Great Lakes Herb Society.

The City Administrator and Director work with staff members to ensure each component of the department is equipped with proper staffing to guarantee effective programming. This process relies on the evaluations and recommendations from different programs and services.

The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department's in-service training is generally described in the city's employee handbook. Specifically, each area of the department has an outlined training program for all new employees. On-the-job training prepares an employee to effectively perform the responsibilities required of his/her position. It allows the employee to learn job duties, correct procedures and expected performance levels under the guidance of an experienced worker. Training also improves job performance, reduces mistakes and reduces work-related injuries and accidents.

Departmental training includes a variety of opportunities for seasonal, part-time and full-time employees, including professional certifications such as: NRPA Certified Park and Recreation Professional, Aquatic Facility Operator, Certified Pool Operator and National Playground Safety Inspector. Employees may attend state and national professional conferences and seminars. Additionally, the city offers a tuition reimbursement and travel and training budget to each department that is reviewed and budgeted on an annual basis.

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Descriptions of training requirements for the Parks and Recreation Department are as follows:

RecSchool Training

All staff is required to attend orientation and monthly staff meetings. A number of training opportunities are offered throughout the year, and employees are notified in advance of these opportunities. With prior approval by the Recreation Coordinator, staff is paid for all training hours. During the first three years of employment, staff members are required to attend 15 hours of training per year, until a total of 45 hours have been completed, as prescribed by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. Training in Communicable Disease Recognition and Prevention, First Aid, and Child Abuse Recognition and Prevention must be completed during the first year of employment. Staff members who have a degree in Early Childhood Education or sufficient documented Early Childhood college courses are exempt from these training requirements, but are encouraged to further their education with RecSchool's support. In the event that a staff person is unable to attend a scheduled training, he/she is responsible for finding a replacement or reimbursing RecSchool for training fees.

P.A.R.K Training

All staff is required to attend an orientation prior to their start date. P.A.R.K Coordinators schedule a two-hour review to explain the policies and procedures as outlined in the P.A.R.K. Staff Handbook. Coordinators also require each staff person to attend monthly in-service trainings on various topics (based on program and staff needs) throughout the year. In addition, each staff person must be certified in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Disease and Recognition, and Prevention of Child Abuse.

Big Splash Training

Employees are evaluated on a seasonal basis and measured on dependability, attendance, job performance, cooperation with supervisors, quality of work, initiative/responsibility, job knowledge, decision making, flexibility and teamwork. Employees at the Big Splash are required to go through a rigorous training process that includes supervisor training, orientation, admissions training, park services, lifeguard certification and rehire classes for returning employees. Advanced or more experienced employees also are given the opportunity to attend a test-out training session, a four-hour long session that determines if the individual is required to attend the other training levels or not.

Senior Center Training

New employees at the Evans Center receive on-the-job training that includes shadowing and reviewing the staff manual with a supervisor. Full- and part-time staff members attend professional development trainings on an as-needed basis. Evans Center staff members attend Parks and Recreation Department staff meetings and hold monthly Center meetings as well. A City of Grove City Policy and Procedures Handbook is available on site for review. All Evans Center bus drivers must have a CDL passenger endorsed driver's license, Motor Vehicle License checks, and must be certified in CPR and First Aid. Driver's are required to complete the DRIVE program (transporting older and disabled passengers training) through the Central Ohio Area

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Agency and Defensive Driving conducted by the National Safety Council every three years. All Evans Center employees are asked to attend monthly staff meetings and in-service trainings (based on program and staff needs) throughout the year.

Gardens at Gantz Training

All volunteers are required to attend a five-day training session generally held in the fall of each year. The Garden Education Coordinator assembles knowledgeable volunteers to provide training in the following areas: history of the farmhouse and the Gantz family, garden development in Grove City, tours of the Gardens, history of herbs and herbalism, herbs in landscaping, culinary herbs, dye herbs, knot gardens, everlastings, medicinal herbs, fragrant plants, library policies and volunteer responsibilities.

The Garden Education Coordinator continually seeks education on gardening trends and methods by attending various educational workshops and conferences such as: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Great Lakes Educational Conference, Central Ohio Organic Gardeners, Inniswood, Franklin County Master Gardeners, Ohio Garden Clubs and short courses offered through the Ohio State University.

Youth and Adult Sports

Employees and volunteers are required to be certified in First Aid and CPR. The training is completed through the city, and individuals are required get re-certified every two years. Volunteer coaches are required to complete an online training through the National Youth Sports Coaches Association.

Safety Training

No matter how well a safety program is developed and administered, the results depend upon the conduct of the individual employee. Individual staff members influence the habits and attitudes of employees. These habits and attitudes start forming the day an employee begins work. Educating employees and safety officers through policies, procedures and training is an essential part of the department's risk management policy. The goal of the department's training is to develop safety awareness in all employees. This awareness will enable them to recognize hazards they may be subjected to through their positions, and to take adequate precautions. This training cannot be effective unless it is a continuous program.

Staff Responsibilities for Training

The department's full-time professional staff is responsible for implementing training for each of their respective staff groups. Specific responsibilities for all staff, regardless of program area, are listed below:

- The Director shall ensure supervisory staff are informed and updated ongoing regarding City safety information and expectations.
- The Recreation Superintendent and Park Maintenance Supervisor shall make certain that safety training is integrated into all staff training programs and is developed as a continuing effort in daily operations. Each supervisor shall make

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certain that his/her program area documents all safety training.

- Recreation Coordinators shall include safety as an integral part of new employees' orientation and in recurring training programs.
- The Director and Superintendents shall monitor all departmental training and assist in obtaining specialized training beyond the capabilities of the department's resources, if needed.

Training Updates

- All employees receive periodic training sessions on topics related to specific functions of their position responsibilities.
- Periodic mock drills are to be scheduled at all sites. Examples of these include: fire drill, tornado drill, etc.
- Specific program area safety training will be scheduled as deemed appropriate by the assigned supervisors.

PARKS FOUNDATION

Parks and recreation services are essential to enhance the quality of life for residents of Grove City. These services benefit the city every day by encouraging businesses and new residents to settle in the area, providing memories for current residents and improving and preserving the community's natural areas. The city funds these services, but the parks have other needs that extend beyond regular maintenance. If a Grove City Parks Foundation was established, it would assist the Parks and Recreation Department in funding these needs. The primary mission of the parks foundation would be to obtain, receive, manage and administer funds and properties for the benefit of the Grove City Parks and Recreation Department's programs and facilities.

A Grove City Parks Foundation would be a 501(c)(iii) non-profit organization whose mandate would be to secure additional funds and resources exclusively for enhancing park and recreation services. This non-profit organization would consist of a group of citizen leaders who would volunteer their time and talent to help residents acquire, protect and nurture the parkland and recreation services that the community needs and desires.

Typically, a parks foundation consist of a minimum of seven members with various professional and personal backgrounds. However, it is common for members of such philanthropic foundations to have experience in accounting, law, marketing and especially fund raising. Part of the plan to establish the parks foundation will include the submission of the Grove City Parks Foundation articles and bylaws to the IRS. Then, an official foundation could be formally approved at a date to be determined.

In order to organize a Grove City Parks Foundation, a collaborative effort between current members of the Park Board, the Parks and Recreation Director, the Recreation

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Superintendent and the Maintenance Supervisor should seek to work with park foundations that have been successfully established in central Ohio. This will ensure the proper steps are taken to develop the bylaws and initiatives of this foundation.

Once an official foundation is formally approved, the parks foundation will be charged with developing a list of initiatives to be conquered quarterly or annually. Some possible initiatives that could be discussed include:

- Provide an opportunity for fund raising in which citizens or businesses are encouraged to make a tax-deductible contribution to a specific project or program.
- Meet increasing fund raising needs for specific program areas, such as swim teams, facility space, etc.
- Promote and distribute funds for a scholarship program.
- Develop a memorial program for the parks that includes benches, trees or other amenities.

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POLICY FOUNDATION DEFINITIONS

Goal

A goal is a broad policy statement expressing a desired outcome in simple terms.

Objective

An objective is a refinement of the goal necessary to give more detailed policy direction to strategies to implement the goal.

Action

An action is a detailed action step, program, project, or policy necessary to initiate and complete an objective.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

G1. **A Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the community.**

A growing community will require a growing park system. In order to properly serve the community, it will be important to have a Parks and Recreation Department that grows with the parks system.

O1. **Adequate staffing levels should be maintained for all departmental functions including administrative staff, program instructors, and parkland maintenance staff.**

- A1. Pursue additional volunteering opportunities for youth and elderly programs
- A2. Develop a plan for future staffing needs

G2. **A Parks and Recreation Department that strives to provide the best possible service to the public.**

Keeping informed of trends in parks and recreation will be important to ensure that the city is offering the best services possible to its residents.

O2. **Necessary training should be provided for department staff.**

- A3. Provide all levels of staff with necessary training to complete their jobs to the best of their ability

O3. **A schedule of park maintenance should be outlined, prioritizing parks and trails for maintenance.**

- A4. Adopt policy on trail and park maintenance (plowing, clearing of debris, painting, equipment replacement, etc)

G2. **The creation of a Grove City Parks Foundation.**

Park foundations are organizations created to support the area's Parks and Recreation Department. Through fund raisers and donations, park foundations are able to offer additional support for city parks and programs.

O4. **Encourage and provide support to community members interested in establishing a Grove City parks foundation.**

- A5. Create a park foundation portion of the website, explaining the benefits of a parks foundation